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A Survey of the Preparation of Teachers of German in the High Schools of the United States.

By Florence G. Jenny, Vassar College.

During the last ten years the discussion of the professional preparation of the modern language teacher of the high school, the present deficiency of that preparation and the prospect for its improvement, has become more and more a feature of the meetings of the smaller modern language associations. Conditions vaguely recognized as unsatisfactory have been explained, deplored, condoned, bettered here and there by individual initiative or superior local educational rulings, ignored far more frequently, as though in tacit acceptance of the fact that the adequate preparation of the high school teacher to teach a foreign language, can be, under existing conditions of salary, time, and distance from Europe, only a practically unattainable ideal.

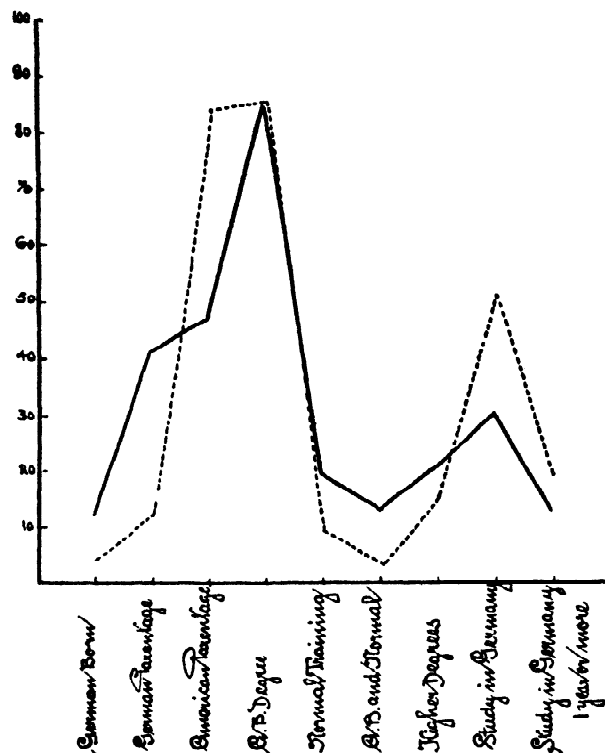
In the hope of contributing a general, initial survey of the actual situation in respect to the qualifications of the teachers of German in our high-schools, I sent in the spring of 1916 questionnaires to the superintendents of schools in towns of the United States having a population of 8,000 or more, asking for information on the following points: the number of teachers of German in the high-school; the parentage of these teachers (whether German by birth or by parentage, or of American parentage); their academic training, as represented by the A. B. degree, or higher degrees; their normal training; the number of teachers having

had study in Germany as a part of their professional preparation, and the length of their residence there. Such a questionnaire could not, obviously, secure data on the quality or extent of the individual teacher's attainment, as measured by the courses taken by him in college, his proficiency in them, or the relative excellence of the German departments of the colleges. My purpose was to secure information along very broad lines from as large a number of schools and teachers as possible; such obvious and simple facts as could and would be furnished me by busy superintendents on the blank forms sent them. More detailed inquiry would have lessened fatally the chances of a return large enough to be in any sense a survey, or warrant the most general and tentative deductions.

My figures are those for the school year ending June 1916. They have therefore in addition to their technical interest, a distinct historical significance, as having been secured on the very eve of a transition period in the study of German in the high schools of this country.

Of the 764 inquiries sent out, 586 (77 per cent.) replies were received, giving information in regard to 1464 teachers of German. Of these, 172 (12 per cent.) were German natives, 592 (41 per cent.) were of German parentage, and 700 (47 per cent.) were of American parentage. 1246 teachers (85 per cent. of the number reporting) held the A. B. degree; 282 (19 per cent.) had been trained in normal schools; 197 (13 per cent.) had had both college and normal training; and 287 (20 per cent.) held higher degrees. (With the exception of six Ph. D.'s these were master's degrees). Of the whole number of teachers reporting, 440 (30 per cent.) had studied in Germany, and 184 teachers (12.5 per cent.) had spent at least one year in residence there. With these percentages for the total, I have compared graphically the percentages for the nine sections of the country, following the reasonable grouping of states adopted by the United States Census Bureau. The comparison of the figures for each individual state with the total figures, would yield somewhat less significant and trustworthy indications than the figures for the larger groups, save perhaps in the case of thickly populated states, from which returns were full and beyond a doubt representative, such as Massachusetts, New York, and Ohio. The unbroken line in the graphs represents the percentages for the total figures returned. The broken line shows the percentages for the special group of states in question, and makes evident the deviation of the group from the average. Under each graph is noted the percentage of German stock to the whole population, for in certain cases an interesting relation can be observed between this percentage and the percentage of teachers of German stock to the whole number teaching German.

The figures for the New England States are based on the reports from 111 towns and 195 teachers. New England shows a smaller percentage of German born teachers (4 per cent.) and of teachers of German parentage (12 per cent.) than any other section of the country. The percentage of American teachers (84) is not even approached by any

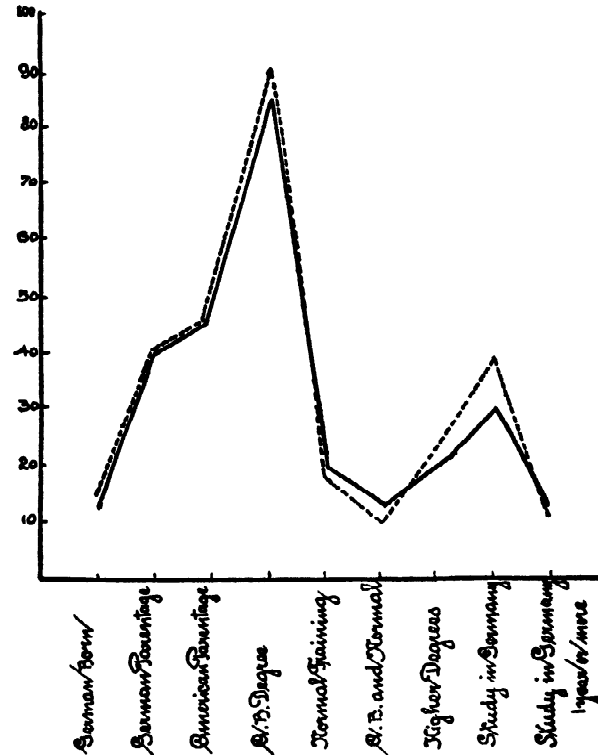


Graph 1. The New England States. (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island.) 2.7% German stock to whole population.

other group of states. Of the six New England states, only Massachusetts and Connecticut reported any teachers of German stock. In respect to college preparation as represented by the A. B. degree, New England's percentge is exactly average (85 per cent.). In normal training, with 9 per cent., she ranks lowest in the nine groups; and only 3.6 per cent. have had both full college and normal training. In higher degrees, with 15 per cent., she falls below the average. The number of teachers however who have studied in Germany exceeds that from any other part of the country. 50.8 per cent. of the teachers reporting have been in Germany, though the majority have spent only short terms there, and only 18.5 per cent. have been one year or more in residence. In this

latter point, though high above the average, she is surpassed by the West North Central, the Mountain, and particularly by the Pacific states.

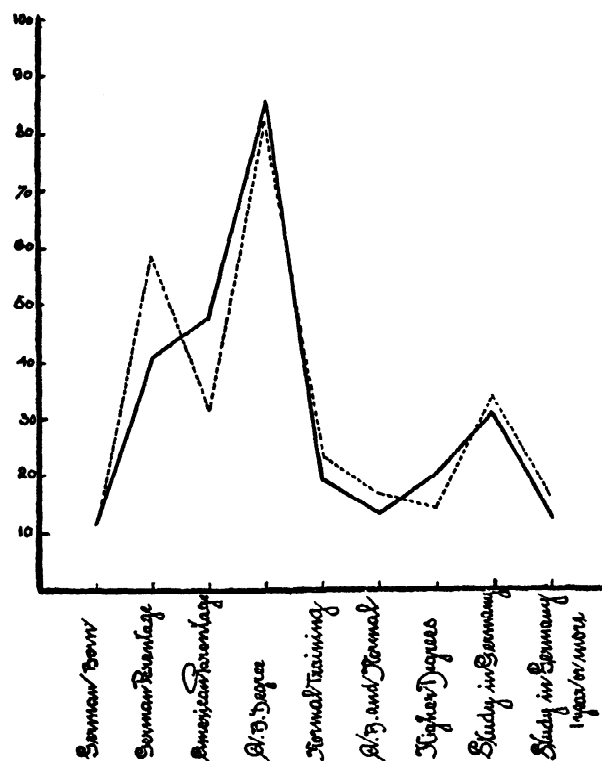
From the Middle Atlantic States reports were received from 472 teachers in 129 towns. The relatively high percentage of teachers of German birth and parentage (14.2 per cent. and 39.2 per cent. respec-



Graph 2. The Middle Atlantic States. (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania.) 11.5% German stock to whole population.

tively) is due to the fact that New York City has 48 native teachers and 87 of German parentage. Excluding New York City, the percentage of German born teachers in the Middle Atlantic group is the same as in New England (4 per cent.), though the percentage of teachers of German parentage is considerably higher (20 per cent.). In respect to academic training, the Middle Atlantic section ranks high; 88.8 per cent. of the reporting teachers hold the A. B. degree. Only the West North Central States (with 89.7 per cent.) and the Pacific States (with 93 per cent.) makes a better showing here. 18 per cent. have had normal training, and 10.2 per cent have had both full college and normal equipment. In point of higher degrees the Middle Atlantic group (with 23.3 per cent.) is again outranked only by two sections, the Mountain

States (with 25 per cent.), and the Pacific States (with 48.6 per cent.). The figures for study in Germany do not include New York City. Excluding New York City, 38.7 per cent. of the reporting teachers have studied in Germany, and 11 per cent have spent at least one year there.

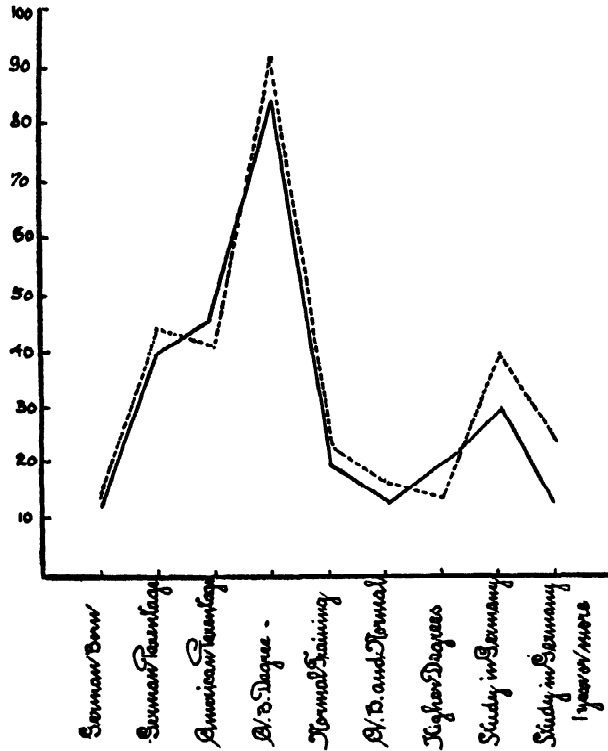


Graph 3. The East North Central States. (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin.) 17.4% German stock to whole population.

The figures for the East North Central States represent replies from 143 towns with 399 teachers. With only 10.5 per cent. teachers of German birth, this section holds first place in respect to teachers of German parentage, with 57.6 per cent. The proportion of teachers of American parentage (31.8 per cent.) is accordingly the lowest for all the nine groups. 81.2 per cent. held the A. B. degree, 23.4 per cent. had had normal training, and 16.6 per cent are credited with both college and normal preparation. In regard to higher degrees, the percentage (14.3) is below that for the total (20 per cent.). From the figures for the study of teachers in Germany it was necessary to exclude the cities of Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Akron, Columbus, and Cleveland, as specific data on this point was not given. Excluding these

cities, 32.7 per cent. of the teachers had been in Germany, and 15.8 per cent. had had residence there of one year or more.

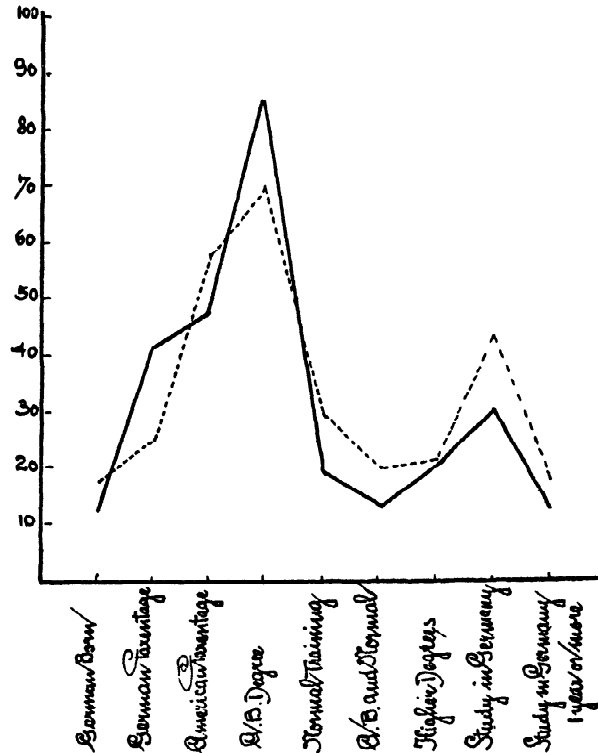
The West North Central section sent reports from 129 teachers in 54 towns. Of these, 13.9 per cent. were German natives, and 44.2 per cent were of German parentage. The proportion of American teachers



Graph 4. The West North Central States. (Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska.) 13.8% German stock to whole population.

is correspondingly small (41 per cent.). It is significant in this connection however that the percentage of teachers holding the A. B. degree is larger than that of any other section except the Pacific (with 93 per cent.). The percentage of normal-trained teachers (22.5 per cent.) is higher than that for the total and 17 per cent. have had both college and normal training. In higher degrees this section holds comparatively low rank, with 13.9 per cent. Excluding the cities of St. Paul and Omaha, whose answers in regard to study in Germany were incomplete, 38.3 per cent. of the reporting teachers have been in Germany, and 23.2 per cent. have had at least one year's residence there. Here the West North Central section is surpassed only by the Mountain and the Pacific States, which have 29.5 per cent. and 33.9 per cent. respectively.

From the South Atlantic States replies were received from 80 teachers in 38 towns. Owing to the large number of German born teachers in the Washington and Baltimore schools, this section shows a large proportion of German born teachers (17.5 per cent.). The percentage of teachers of German parentage is however only 25, so that the pro-



Graph 5. The South Atlantic States. (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, District of Columbia.) 1.8% German stock to whole population.

portion of American teachers is comparatively large (57.5 per cent.). This group has the smallest percentage of teachers with the A. B. degree (70 per cent.) and the highest percentage of those with normal training (30 per cent.). 20 per cent. have had both. 21.3 per cent. hold higher degrees. The fact that a very large number of the Washington teachers have studied in Germany raises the percentage in this point to 43.5. Because of insufficient data Baltimore and Washington teachers could not be included in the percentage representing at least one year's study in Germany. Excluding these cities, the showing for the South Atlantic States in this respect is 18 per cent.

(To be concluded.)